



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
Northern District of Texas

1100 Commerce Street, 3rd Floor
Dallas, Texas 75242-1699

Telephone (214)659-8600
Fax (214)767-0978

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: 214/659-8707
www.usdoj.gov/usao/txn

DALLAS, TEXAS
JULY 28, 2004

LOCAL DRUG ORGANIZATION DISMANTLED

Multi-Count Federal Indictment Charges 26 Defendants

United States Attorney Richard B. Roper announced today that a major cocaine, methamphetamine and marijuana distribution ring operating in the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex, has been dismantled following numerous arrests made today by law enforcement officers from the North Texas High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (North Texas HIDTA).

“The North Texas HIDTA Task Force has brought together a team of dedicated federal, state and local law enforcement agents who are tirelessly working to effectively deal with the threat of drug trafficking in our area,” said U.S. Attorney Roper. “These arrests are an example of that hard work and demonstrate our commitment to tear down large-scale narcotics trafficking organizations in our neighborhoods.” Roper continued, “This indictment illustrates our multi-faceted approach to crush these drug-trafficking enterprises by bringing traditional drug trafficking charges as well as charges focusing on the laundering of drug proceeds and the forfeiting of drug profits.”

A federal grand jury in Dallas returned a sealed indictment last month charging Fabian Martinez and other members of his organization with conspiracy to distribute cocaine, marijuana and methamphetamine. Some of the defendants were also charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering, money laundering, and distribution of a controlled substance. The indictment also includes several forfeiture counts. All defendants, if convicted, face a maximum statutory sentence of life imprisonment.

In late 2001, the North Texas HIDTA, based in the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex, initiated an investigation targeting Fabian Martinez. Martinez was identified as the leader of a Dallas-based drug trafficking organization that was responsible for the importation

and distribution of more than 50 kilograms of cocaine and several hundred pounds of marijuana, per month. Intelligence gathered during the course of this investigation established a nexus between the Martinez organization and the notorious Gulf Cartel. As a result, this investigation was designated as an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) Case, in the Northern District of Texas, and was named "Operation Lone Star." The investigation of Martinez and other co-conspirators identified several organizations and multiple, poly-drug sources of supply operating in Texas, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, Illinois, Ohio, Mexico and Guatemala.

As a direct result of this investigation, the North Texas HIDTA and other offices/agencies involved in the investigation, have seized large quantities of drugs, many hundreds of thousands of dollars in U.S. currency, vehicles and firearms. Several properties have also been identified in the indictment for forfeiture.

The following 11 defendants were arrested last night and early this morning at the locations noted:

Abelardo Camero, in Arlington, Texas
Raymond Garcia, in Dallas, Texas
Federico Guerrero, in Dallas, Texas
Adrian Martinez, in Dallas, Texas
Fabian Martinez, in Grand Prairie, Texas
Armando Medrano, in Arlington, Texas
Esequiel Medrano, in Grand Prairie, Texas
Miguel Perez, in McAllen, Texas
Jose Rico, in McAllen, Texas
Rafael Rodriguez, in Dallas, Texas
Agustin Soto, in Carrollton, Texas

The following four defendants, Rafael Alvarez, Richard Chung, Marland Cooper, and Gregory Franks are already in custody on related charges. Arrest warrants have been issued for 11 other defendants named in the indictment.

Special Agent in Charge Gary G. Olenkiewicz, head of the Drug Enforcement Administration's Dallas Field Division, praised North Texas HIDTA's investigation. "North Texas HIDTA has shown, through this investigation, the value of combining the resources of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies against a common threat. This complex, multi-city, poly-drug organization impacted the citizens of several communities and I commend the efforts of all the agencies and personnel involved."

North Texas HIDTA Director, Mona Neill stated "the North Texas HIDTA is a role model program for the regional concept of local, state and federal law enforcement working together and this investigation is one great success story demonstrating what cooperative hard work can achieve. The investigation not only represents the operational efforts involved, but the intelligence gathering shared between the different agencies as well. Hopefully, this model concept will continue to be used to fight the war against drugs and even the war against terrorism."

Chief Glen Hill, Grand Prairie Police Department, affirmed that through the combined resources of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, a complex and well-organized narcotics distribution organization has been identified and dismantled. "We are grateful for the dedication and persistence of the many officers who have been focused on this group, for many months. Today, their efforts have been rewarded with the arrests of those that have been suppliers of misery and despair through illegal drugs to communities in North Texas and beyond."

Arlington Police Chief Theron Bowman said, "Illegal drugs threaten our children's future and the health of our communities. Regional efforts of this nature are critical in our fight against this scourge."

Chief Ralph Mendoza stated that "the Fort Worth Police Department, which is the lead agency, along with DEA in this operation, is very pleased with the effort extended by members of this department, in conjunction with the Arlington and Grand Prairie Police Departments, along with the DEA, FBI and IRS to target, arrest and prosecute members of the MARTINEZ Drug Trafficking Organization. Fort Worth Police Department Officers and DEA Special Agents have done a magnificent job in this operation and are to be applauded for their labors, perseverance and service to the community and their agencies. This is exactly how we expect our personnel to operate now and in the future in dealing with these and other Drug Trafficking Organizations."

Special Agent in Charge, Michael D. Lacenski, Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation said, "IRS Criminal Investigation is committed to fighting the war on drugs along with other federal, state and local agencies by participating in the OCDETF and HIDTA investigations. We play a unique role in federal law enforcement's counter-drug effort in that we target the profit and financial gains of narcotics traffickers which comprise a significant portion of the untaxed underground economy."

An indictment is an accusation by a federal grand jury and a defendant is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven guilty.

United States Attorney Roper praised the coordinated efforts of local, state, and federal law enforcement, including the North Texas HIDTA, which is comprised of approximately 150 officers from federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. Mr. Roper also praised the investigative work of the Western Drug Squad of the North Texas HIDTA, which is represented by the Fort Worth, Grand Prairie and Arlington Police Departments, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation, and the Drug Enforcement Administration, including DEA's Regional Enforcement Team.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Chad E. Meacham and Rick Calvert.

